

The Balanced Curriculum:

A Guiding Document for Scheduling and Implementation of the North Carolina Standard Course of Study at the Elementary Level

Foreword

It is the intent of the North Carolina General Assembly and the State Board of Education, with the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, that every student be offered a comprehensive educational program that includes ALL areas in the *North Carolina Standard Course of Study* (SCS). Each elementary and middle school has responsibility, as funding allows, for making sure instruction is provided in arts education (dance, music, theatre arts and visual arts), English language arts, guidance, healthful living (health education and physical education), information skills and computer skills, mathematics, science, second languages and social studies. Students in grades 6-8 must have access to career-technical education. Although all disciplines are not tested, the Standard Course of Study must be taught.

It is important to teach all areas of the curriculum, not just those which are assessed. For example, one of the most effective strategies for teaching the entire curriculum is to teach English language arts and mathematics in conjunction with science, social studies, healthful living, foreign languages and the arts. Integration as a curriculum implementation strategy links the content and skills from various disciplines. It is our belief that students who receive a balanced curriculum and possess the knowledge, skills, and abilities to transfer and connect ideas and concepts across disciplines will be successful as measured by standardized tests as well as other indicators of student success.

In order to provide an integrated, connected, and comprehensive curriculum, teaching schedules must allow for sufficient planning time for teachers – with grade levels, across grade levels, and with special areas and special services teachers. Students must have access to uninterrupted blocks of instructional time to receive in-depth, connected instruction, and to develop concepts rather than memorize facts in isolation. Awareness of the